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ocean to a considerable height is thus kept in a state of motion and change, and the invisible elastic vapour which is sent into the atmosphere by evaporation, in one part, comes down as rain in another. The different quantities of vapour condensed in equal times in different localities, and the elevations at which the condensation takes place, modify the movements of the air in various degrees, and in all conceivable ways, but the nature of the processes is always the same."

6. *On Dr. Rink's Remarks respecting the supposed Discovery by Dr. Kane of the North Coast of Greenland and an Open Polar Sea.*

THE PRESIDENT.—I have, Gentlemen, now to call your attention to a subject which, although at first sight it might appear untoward to the American gentlemen, Mr. Poor, Professor Alexander, and any others who may be present, will, I have no doubt, when properly explained, satisfy them that the feeling of vexation which has been expressed at New York, has solely arisen out of an inaccurate newspaper account of what took place at a former meeting of this Society. You will recollect that at the meeting of this Society in April a paper was read, as sent to us by Dr. Henry Rink, the Danish Lieutenant-Governor of South Greenland—a gentleman extremely well acquainted with the glaciers of that country. In that paper, whilst making some comments of a critical character on Dr. Kane's work, he questioned the accuracy of the determination of the extreme north latitude fixed by Morton, one of Dr. Kane's party. Upon that paper being read, two of our distinguished Arctic explorers, Sir George Back and Captain Collinson, made observations which led to a conviction on the part of Mr. Arrowsmith and the practical geographers who had studied the subject, that the extent of northern latitude claimed by Dr. Kane, on the observation of his steward Morton, must be reduced.

Upon that subject I will request the Secretary to read a letter from Professor Bache, who completely justifies the main conclusions at which our nautical men had arrived. In fact, the only difference between them and the Professor amounts to some seven or eight miles. Now, if that is all the difference existing between the American version and our own, it is surely undeserving of attention.

My chief object, however, in calling attention to the case is to state that throughout all the observations made on the former evening, not a single individual disparaged in the slightest degree the great merits of that illustrious traveller, Dr. Kane. We all truly admire him; and during the short period he was amongst us, every person who saw him, loved him. We gave him our gold medal, have done him all the honour in our power, and having striven to record our high sense of his great and noble achievements, it was impossible that we should disparage his merits.

Mr. Jay, in his letter to myself, uses words employed in a newspaper. Now, I must declare from the chair that that statement is most inaccurate. Had the statement been correct, our American friends would have had reason indeed to be offended. Dr. Shaw will now read the letter of Professor Bache addressed to the Hon. G. M. Dallas, the American Minister:—

Washington, W. C., May 6, 1858.

MY DEAR SIR,—As desired in the note addressed to you by Dr. Norton Shaw, under date of April 13, 1858, I have caused an examination to be made of the data for Morton's northing in the expedition in which he saw the open Polar Sea. I selected for this

purpose Charles A. Schott, Esq., Assistant in the Coast Survey, who was chosen by Dr. Kane to reduce many of the results of his observations, and who is very exact as a computer, and has remarkably good judgment in regard to data.

Dr. Kane states in his 'Narrative of the Second Grinnell Expedition,' Appendix V., vol. ii., that the positions given to Cape Jefferson by dead reckoning and by astronomical observations differ by 43' 6" of latitude, and that he had adopted a mean of the results by the two methods, instead of that given by either method singly.

Mr. Schott reports that, "After verifying the astronomical data of Capes Jackson, Madison, and Jefferson, they were plotted, and the shore line run in accordingly, supported by some available bearings. From Cape Jefferson the bearing to the northernmost cape reached (Cape Independence) is by compass N. 148° E. or N. 40° E. true, distance 17 nautical miles. Consequently, if we base the shore line on the sun's meridional observation, and not upon the mean between the dead reckoning and the astronomical observations (as Dr. Kane has done, and so stated in his 'Table of Positions,' Appendix VI.), we trace the shore line as shown in red ink on the accompanying sketch, and Morton's greatest northing (at Cape Independence) becomes $80^{\circ} 53'$ ($81^{\circ} 12'$ by chart in vol. i. of the 'Narrative').

"That Dr. Rink has deducted too much by placing Cape Constitution in $80^{\circ} 44'$, and hence Cape Independence in $80^{\circ} 41'$, is plain from the fact that Morton observed the sun in $80^{\circ} 41'$ at noon at Cape Jefferson, a point nearly 12 miles to the south of Cape Independence.

"Believing the astronomical observations to be entitled to greater confidence, $80^{\circ} 56'$ for the latitude of Cape Constitution should be adopted in preference to $81^{\circ} 15'$, as given on the chart in vol. i. In no case, however, could a latitude lower than $80^{\circ} 53'$ be assigned to it."

The conclusions in regard to the open Polar Sea do not depend in any way upon this difference.

With great respect and regard,

Very truly yours,

Hon. George M. Dallas,

A. D. BACHE.

Minister of the United States to Great Britain.

CAPTAIN COLLINSON, F.R.G.S.—I am particularly glad that this subject has been amicably adjusted. As geographers we must pay attention to observations, and not to reckoning. A Flemish yard or a Dutchman's foot is of no value in

estimation when we can fix a geographical position from astronomical sources. Professor Bache's letter suggests a point as the farthest limit of Morton's journey, which differs so slightly from the conclusions we have arrived at, that there is no necessity to raise a discussion about it. But I should like once more to pay a tribute to the memory of that noble man who we may almost say sacrificed his life in order to rescue our fellow-countrymen (hear, hear); and I am sure you will all join me in this mark of respect to Dr. Kane.

The PRESIDENT.—I would observe that the remarks had reference only to the supposed imperfect observations of Morton, the steward. The whole question turned upon that point, and had no reference to what Dr. Kane himself had observed. I ought to have mentioned that, in consequence of the inaccurate report in the newspaper, the Geographical Society of New York passed a resolution instructing Mr. John Jay, their Foreign Corresponding Secretary, to ask this Society to favour them with a copy of Dr. Rink's paper, and also of the remarks of the gentlemen who took part in the discussion.

Now, as Mr. Poor is present, I can assure him that he will obtain the fullest explanations from the gentlemen who did speak on that occasion, as well as a copy of the paper that was read; and I hope that he will return to his own country with the assurance that there was nothing said or imagined which in any way reflected on the truthfulness and ability of Dr. Kane.

PROFESSOR J. H. ALEXANDER, of the United States.—It was only a few moments ago I was made aware that this subject was coming up. Therefore, I am not acquainted with the facts except as they have been mentioned to the meeting. I can only say as an American, in which character you, Sir, have done me the honour to call upon me, that the expressions of Professor Bache, the hereditary friend of Dr. Kane, as I may be claimed also to be myself, seem to me to cover the whole question. In the first place, it should be borne in mind that Dr. Kane was not an astronomer and geographer by profession, but a physician in the United States navy. The impulse of his own feelings and love for science carried him in this direction, after having led him first very far south in Mexico, where he made explorations which did not yield in adventure and interest to his voyage to the Arctic regions. The same impulse bore him to the north, but without the precise technical education which would make his observations entirely reliable. Therefore, if he did make a mistake as to a distance of a few miles, I do not think it a matter of very great importance. The great merit of Dr. Kane—the merit which we as Americans principally recognise—is the animus, the disposition he showed (hear, hear), and the great general results he gave us in extending our knowledge of the geography of that great Arctic region. Further than that, I would say it appears to me, as a man of science, in which character you have also referred to me, though I have very small claim to it, and at most can only ask to be considered as a *lover* of science, that the claims of science are not bounded by any country. Science requires precision when she comes to details and observations, whether made by Americans or Englishmen. Therefore I am happy to see that, after the judicious and fair sifting which these observations of Dr. Kane have undergone, no greater error has been discovered, so that any of us, should we be inclined to transport ourselves to those inhospitable regions, may now rely upon being never out of our reckoning more than a few miles.

I think, finally, that there is every reason, on the part of Americans, for being more than satisfied with the just and kind manner in which your Society has treated the whole affair.

The PRESIDENT.—I ought lastly to mention, to the honour of our kinsmen on the other side of the Atlantic, that, not content with having done so much in the search after Franklin, they now, on the proposal of Dr. Hayes, the companion of Kane, contemplate a further expedition to ascertain whether

there is or is not an open sea beyond Smith Sound. As geographers we cannot too warmly thank them for the spirit they have displayed in this Arctic subject.

Before adjourning the meeting the President announced that, by the desire of the Council, he would again apply for the permission of the Senate of the University of London and of the Council of the Royal Society to hold the meetings during the next session at Burlington House.

ADDITIONAL NOTICES.

1. *Extract from Notes upon the Passage up the Peiho with Lord Macartney in 1793.* By Captain PARISH, R.A. With a Chart of the course of the river, printed on a reduced scale in Sir George Staunton's Account of the Embassy, and lately republished by the Hydrographical Department.

Communicated by Sir WOODBINE PARISH, K.C.H., F.R.G.S.

ABOUT the end of the month of July, 1793, H. M. S. *Lion* and the *Hindustan*, a large East Indiaman, attended by three small brigs, arrived with Lord Macartney and the British embassy off the Peiho River, in the Gulf of Pe-che-li. The depth of water not being thought sufficient to justify a nearer approach of the large ships with safety, they were anchored at a distance of 15 or 20 miles from the land, one of the brigs being sent in to communicate with the Chinese authorities, who were no sooner apprised of their arrival than they sent off supplies of all things needful for them, and junks without number to facilitate their landing and farther progress. It took some days to transfer all the heavy baggage and valuable presents for the Emperor, when, all being ready, the ambassador himself, with the gentlemen of his suite, went on board the brigs, and, accompanied by a swarm of Chinese junks, with a fair wind and tide, accomplished the entrance of the river without difficulty; and, after crossing a bar which lies off its mouth with only 7 or 8 feet water over it, ran up it some little distance, and were landed at a little town called Ta-coo, where the viceroy of the province was waiting to receive them with all honours.* At Ta-coo they went on board some passage-vessels prepared by the Chinese for their reception, described as being very conveniently fitted up for their accommodation—very high out of the water, and, although 70 or 80 feet long, of such light construction as not to draw more than 18 inches when all were on board. In these vessels it took them two long days to reach the city of Tiensing, a distance, according to Captain Parish's calculation by the course of the river, of about 85 miles from its mouth, although in a direct line not more than half as much.

Tiensing is situated at the confluence of the Peiho and Euhò, or Yung-leang-hò (the grain-bearing river), so named from its being the channel by which the greater part of the supplies for the consumption of the capital are brought from the southern provinces through the Grand Canal, and the many

* See Journal of the Royal Geographical Society, vol. iii. p. 304.—ED.